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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-INDIA NUCLEAR DEAL, MIDDLE EAST, AFGHANISTAN, IRAN, U.S.-IRAN, PAKISTAN; NEW DELHI-JULY 12-14, 2008.

This cable reports on relevant media reaction from India's large non-English press. Embassy New Delhi reports on English-language media via email in the daily "Early Edition". USG customers please write to Geeta Krishali (KrishaliG@state.gov) to subscribe to the "Early Edition."

U.S.-INDIA NUCLEAR DEAL

1. "NO MORE DELAY," editorial in the July 14 independent Kolkata Bengali daily, ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA. "At the end of his rule, the Prime Minister has taken the first bold step on the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal by prioritizing national interests and ignoring nonsense opposition by the Leftists... If the government wins the confidence vote in Parliament, the Leftists will no longer be able to put up blockades... This is the right moment for accomplishing pending tasks of reforms... Nehruvian 'nationalism' is now pass. Establishing India as a formidable power in the international arena is now true nationalism... The next generation Indians prefer to tread along the path of reforms and they are the majority."

2. "WHAT IS THE NEED FOR THIS SUDDEN HASTE VIS-@-VIS NUCLEAR DEAL?" editorial in the July 14, 2008 centrist Gujarati daily GUJARATMITRA. "While the nuclear deal has been in the debate from 2005, it has never gathered the momentum it has for the past week or so. During his visit to G8 meeting, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told President Bush that India was ready to go ahead with this bilateral accord.... Some pertinent questions here are: why did Prime Minister Singh chose to present the draft proposal [safeguards agreement] to a foreign body [IAEA] before taking the nation into confidence? What prompted Singh to announce from 35, 000 feet [onboard his official aircraft en-route to Japan for G8 meeting] that India will seek IAEA approval? Is this helplessness or over-confidence? By taking this recourse, the government might be trying to divert the attention of people from other important issues like the inflation. One other

reason for this sudden haste could be President Bush leaving office in January 2009. There is possibility that the new incumbent in the White House would like to rework the whole deal again.... Whatever may be the case, the future of deal and the future of government depends on the trust vote. The Congress-led UPA government must not forget that former Prime Minister Vajpayee had lost the trust vote by one vote in Parliament!..."

¶3. "PULP IS IMPORTANT; NOT THE PEEL," editorial in the July 12, Bangalore-based independent Kannada daily KANNADA PRABHA: "Recent political developments in Delhi and other places indicate that importance is being given to the peel rather than the pulp of the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement... No reactions have come from the politicians or parties after studying the draft text that has been sent to the IAEA... Most of the parties are trying to get political mileage out of the issue... Nuclear deal is a crucial issue and it will have an impact on the future of this nation. This issue should be debated well and a decision should be taken on the basis of the merits of the case. Trivial issues should not get the focus while debating this issue of national importance."

¶4. "CONDITIONAL COOPERATION," op-ed in the July 12 DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily by strategic analyst Brahma Chellaney:

"The IAEA has made the text of India's safeguards agreement public. Many questions have arisen after reading the text carefully. It is not mentioned anywhere in the text that India is a nuclear weapon state, and this is a unique agreement with India, first of its kind ever. India is permanently and legally bringing its entire civilian nuclear program under the IAEA safeguards. As for India's right to take corrective measures in case of fuel supply disruption, no such right has been secured in definable terms in the agreement. Nowhere does the text guarantee life-long fuel supplies, which is a violation of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's assurance to the Parliament of regular inspections with uninterrupted supply. India has willingly forfeited its right to perpetual supply by agreeing to remain powerless in a Tarapur-style fuel cut-off situation."

MIDDLE EAST

¶5. "PATH OF (NON) PEACE," editorial in the July 14 independent Kolkata Bengali daily, ANANDABAZAR PATRIKA. "...The U.S. should dissuade from its policy of...keeping Iran continuously under suffocating pressure. There cannot be a single roadmap, approved by Israel and the U.S., for peace in the Mideast. Rather than imposing a U.S. blueprint, if the onus of solving the problem is vested with the organization of Islamic states, progress might be achieved. U.S. strategic interests and the Mideast peace interests may be mutually antithetical instead of being complimentary to each other."

AFGHANISTAN

¶6. "CONCERNS OF THE RED CROSS", editorial in the July 13 right-of-center Urdu daily "RASHTRIYA SAHARA", New Delhi: "Red Cross International has expressed its deep concern over the killings of guileless citizens in Afghanistan. It is difficult to predict whether killings of innocent citizens will stop or not, but in the perspective of mass killings, it becomes the responsibility of the U.S. and its military allies to withdraw their forces from Afghanistan. They should, at least, direct their soldiers to ensure the safety of common people before any action. It is also the responsibility of the world community to raise this issue in international fora, including at the United Nations. They should come forward to save war-torn Afghanistan and its people. The Red Cross appeal is a

tool to gauge the inhuman and illegal activities of allied forces in Afghanistan."

IRAN

¶17. "GROWING CONFLICT," editorial in the July 12 HINDUSTAN Hindi daily: "U.S.-Iran confrontation has further escalated with the missile tests. Some experts say Iran's claims of its missile capability are overestimated and the strong U.S. reaction has added fuel to the fire. The growing tension between the two has resulted in instability in West Asia... The possibility of an Israeli attack on Iran has further deepened the crisis. The U.S. accuses Iran of manufacturing nuclear weapons, but the latter says it is a civilian nuclear program. Whatever be the truth, the dispute cannot be solved via military attacks, but with talks and UN intervention. Korea is a good example of that. A diplomatic initiative is needed because fighting nations ultimately have to meet at some dialogue table."

U.S.-IRAN

¶18. "FEAR OF WAR, ONCE AGAIN," editorial in the July 12, Hubli-based independent Kannada daily SAMYUKTHA KARNATAKA: "Once again the clouds of war have been looming large over West Asia as Iran, despite U.S.' pressure, is reluctant to stop its nuclear program. Israel also wants to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon... The United States believes that Iran has nuclear weapons and hence not prepared to trust Iran. It is interesting to recall that the US had earlier invaded Iraq on the pretext that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction... The current situation in Iran, which is the fourth major oil exporter, will upset the contemporary world economic scenario. If peace does not prevail in Iran, oil prices will escalate to cause hardship to the developing countries. It is the responsibility of the United Nations to take urgent measures to ensure peace in West Asia."

PAKISTAN

¶19. "PAKISTANI NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION," op-ed in the July 13 DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily by security affairs specialist K. Subrahmanyam: "Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadir Khan has disclosed that his confession of being solely responsible for smuggling nuclear technology to Iran, North Korea and Libya was made under the Pakistani government and ISI's pressure. The proliferation could not have taken place without the complicity of Pakistan's military, but the government has reiterated that Khan is solely responsible. If Pakistan's nuclear security is so weak, then the world should be concerned about the safety of nuclear weapons and equipment with Pakistan.... U.S. is facing embarrassment by Khan's disclosure that Washington's long-time surrogate Pervez Musharraf was in the loop about the country's nuclear deals with North Korea. If North Korea confirms Khan's statement, it will not only tarnish Pakistan's reputation, but the CIA and the U.S. President will also be exposed."

White